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Security Council

Sixtieth year

Provisional

5110th meeting

Wednesday, 12 January 2005, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Bielsa	(Argentina)
Members:	Algeria	Mr. Baali
	Benin	Mr. Adechi
	Brazil	Mr. Amorim
	China	Mr. Wang Guangya
	Denmark	Ms. Løj
	France	Mr. Muselier
	Greece	Mr. Vassilakis
	Japan	Mr. Oshima
	Philippines	Mr. Baja
	Romania	Mr. Motoc
	Russian Federation	Mr. Denisov
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United Republic of Tanzania	Mr. Mahiga
	United States of America	Mr. Noriega

Agenda

The question of Haiti

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05-20573 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

Representation and welcome to Ministers

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I should like to acknowledge and welcome the presence in the Council Chamber of Her Excellency The Honourable Dame Billie Miller, Senior Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Barbados; His Excellency Mr. Celso Luiz Nunes Amorim, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Brazil; His Excellency Mr. Ignacio Walker, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Chile; His Excellency Mr. Carlos Morales Troncoso, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic; His Excellency Mr. Renaud Muselier, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs of France; His Excellency Mr. Yvon Siméon, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Haiti; and His Excellency Mr. Roger Noriega, Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs of the United States.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The question of Haiti

The President (*spoke in* Spanish): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Barbados, Bolivia, Canada, Chile, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Luxembourg, Mexico, Morocco, Norway, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Siméon (Haiti) took a seat at the Council table; the representatives of the other aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with the usual practice, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Juan Gabriel Valdés, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Valdés to take a seat at the Council table.

In accordance with the usual practice, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Luigi R. Einaudi, Acting Secretary General of the Organization of American States.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Einaudi to take the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Juan Gabriel Valdés, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti. I now give him the floor.

Mr. Valdés (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like at the outset, Sir, to express my satisfaction at seeing you preside over the Council and to congratulate the Argentine Republic on the excellent manner in which it has been conducting the work of the Council during this first month of the year. I am also extremely grateful to you for having convened this open debate of the Security Council at the ministerial level to consider the situation in Haiti. This meeting is a reflection of the interest of the countries that are friends of Haiti and of the members of the international community in general in the efforts being made by the Government and the people of Haiti to overcome their difficulties. I also warmly welcome the presence here today of the Acting Secretary General of the Organization of American States, Mr. Luigi Einaudi.

This meeting also provides a show of political support for the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and represents a vote of confidence for the role that the United Nations can play in assisting in the recovery of societies in which a combination of poverty and weak governance lead to internal violence.

I should like to reiterate here my conviction that, if we provide Haiti with continuing international political support, that country will emerge from its present crisis and become reintegrated into international society, in a framework characterized by internal political stability and democratic freedoms.

I should like also to thank the Transitional Government of Haiti for the warm welcome it accorded the Mission and for the relationship based on mutual trust that we have built since the inception of the Mission. The Transitional Government of President Boniface Alexandre and Prime Minister Gérard Latortue have courageously shouldered a very difficult task — one that is not always understood by their compatriots. In a climate of profound national division, they have had to revitalize institutions that were on the verge of collapse, and to deal with forces seeking chaos and destabilization while maintaining sufficient openness to enable the country, with the participation of all, to set out once again on the path towards democratic legitimacy — and that in the framework of a formal commitment to renounce any position of power following the upcoming elections.

Since my last appearance before the Council, on 22 November last, Haiti has embarked on a different phase. Indeed, although security challenges remain complex and factors leading to insecurity and instability have not yet been dealt with, the attempts made last November by armed groups deliberately to destabilize the country were foiled. We have also seen a reduced level of violence and insecurity, and the launching by the Transitional Government of political initiatives has made room for participation by all those who reject violence and made it easier to carry out the electoral process planned for the end of this year in conditions of peace and freedom.

MINUSTAH has almost reached full strength in terms of the authorized number of troops and civil police and has been deploying throughout the country, as described in the recent report of the Secretary-General. As a result, our ability to deal with situations that might jeopardize security and the political transition has improved substantially. As a result, MINUSTAH's recent efforts have focussed essentially on robust and sustained initiatives in the area of security.

It is important to note once again that the security concept that underpins and guides the United Nations Mission includes, on the one hand, the legitimate use of force when necessary or indispensable, and, on the other, a focus on the most urgent problems which affect the more vulnerable people of Haiti. We have thus embarked on a new phase of the Mission, which I will expand upon.

MINUSTAH has taken clear-cut steps towards stabilizing the security situation. Groups of former soldiers who dared to defy the authority of the State and of the Mission had to quickly back down, while other illegal armed groups, which include some who claim to support former President Aristide, are losing ground.

Threats and challenges in the area of security remain serious, but we are gradually beginning to see a greater degree of stability. On 14 December 2004, MINUSTAH launched a major political and military operation jointly with elements of the Haitian National Police in the district of Cité Soleil, in the city of Port-au-Prince — an area that is well known for harbouring criminal armed groups, many of which have different and conflicting political loyalties. The objectives of the operation were to restore order and security in the area through the presence and the firm and ongoing control of MINUSTAH, which will facilitate the gradual restoration of the autonomous functioning of the police in the area, as well as create conditions for the normalization of activities ranging from the proper functioning of the public administration to the reactivation of trade and the relaunching of various types of humanitarian operations at the local and international levels.

Aside from isolated and sporadic gunfire, Operation Liberty, as it was called, did not encounter strong armed resistance and was successful, with no deaths recorded within MINUSTAH or the Haitian National Police. Unfounded allegations that many lives had been lost were completely and thoroughly refuted.

In the first phase of the operation, two police stations were reopened in Cité Soleil, where MINUSTAH forces have an ongoing presence. The deployment of MINUSTAH patrols and the activities of civil servants have made it possible to initiate contacts leading to a variety of quick-impact projects financed by the Mission. In parallel, United Nations agencies will be undertaking new initiatives in the area. We are aware that the inhabitants are still afraid publicly to express their satisfaction at the evident

change that has taken place in terms of improved security. We are therefore convinced that gradual progress in health, sanitation and educational programmes, which were halted for a long time because of the violence, as well as the prompt launching of our disarmament, demobilization and reintegration initiative, will soon make it possible to bring together and involve Cité Soleil neighbours in a process that will qualitatively change the area, thereby helping to eliminate and dismantle the armed bands that are still active in the area. Likewise, an initiative taken by MINUSTAH and the Transitional Government will make it possible to set up a standing high-level mechanism to identify and prioritize development projects specifically designed for the inhabitants of Cité Soleil.

On 15 December 2004 a group of armed former soldiers, with an authorization illegitimately given by a municipal civil servant, took possession of the abandoned private residence of former President Aristide in Tabarre, in the city of Port-au-Prince. The group convened media representatives and declared that it would set up its new permanent base in that location. The Transitional Government reacted immediately, saying that it would not tolerate such a measure. It fired the municipal civil servant who had given the alleged authorization and called on MINUSTAH to put an end to the occupation of the premises. The Mission responded promptly and deployed a considerable number of soldiers around the captured building. Thanks to MINUSTAH's firm and resolute approach and to a level-headed, sincere and open approach to dialogue, the situation was resolved on 17 December, with no losses. Currently, all who participated in that venture have been disarmed, except for their leader, who is still at large. Some have received advance compensation — which the Government had promised all former combatants. And, as a group, they have agreed to participate in reintegration programmes.

In the past 10 weeks, MINUSTAH has started planning and organizing a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programme. While we have some of the required resources, and while a work plan will be submitted to government authorities this week, security and political conditions are not yet favourable to the programme's full implementation. We welcome the imminent creation of the disarmament committee, as announced by Prime Minister Latortue; this is essential for developing the process. At the same time, our Mission is closely following the Transitional Government's current policy of granting compensation and severance pay to former members of the Haitian armed forces. The Government of Haiti believes that this is fair compensation for individuals who were demobilized without consideration of rights stemming from their paid contributions during their military career. However, we agree with Haitian authorities that this policy has to be situated within the context of the disarmament process and that after the prompt payment of the first part of the promised amount, any further monetary payment must be conditioned on the surrender of military weapons to the Transitional Government. With respect to the armed groups among marginalized sectors of the population, the disarmament policy contemplates actions to create conditions for reintegration that, while not deviating from our policy of firmness vis-à-vis the challenge those groups represent, can persuade some to return to a working life and to surrender their arms.

The events I have just summarized indicate in practical terms MINUSTAH's course of action and implementation in dealing with the challenge posed by the various armed groups in Haiti, thus fulfilling the mandate of the Security Council: to demonstrate firmness and calm in the use of force in order to ensure respect for law and order and to demonstrate social awareness in order to understand the source of the basic demands of the population. I would like to mention that MINUSTAH troops have undertaken infrastructure work on roads in Port-au-Prince and Cap-Haïtien, which has helped enormously to establish good relations with the population, in particular among the poorest sectors of the capital.

Events seem to be helping to achieve this strategy, which is vital to our effort to establish a process of national dialogue and ensure that elections are held this year. I note that this policy of the Mission, after difficult periods when the military component of the Mission was not yet fully established, last October, has today led to a substantial improvement in relations between MINUSTAH and the population of Haiti, which has witnessed the soldiers' dedication to tasks aimed at improving the living conditions of the neediest. The way inhabitants applaud at the arrival of digging machines and soldiers carrying pickaxes and shovels to improve the quality of the streets demonstrates the importance of providing the Mission

with a greater number of military engineers and demonstrates the adjustment of the Mission's focus, which always combines deterrent force with the Mission's participation in and support for social development.

The swearing-in on 6 January 2005 of the new representative of the Catholic Church in the Provisional Electoral Council, the Transitional Government's decision to allocate additional funding, the establishment of a mechanism for the disbursal of those funds through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Haiti and the planned disbursal of the financing pledges made by Canada and the European Union allow me to state that the basic technical elements for proceeding with the electoral timetable for 2005 are now in place. That MINUSTAH expects to sustain the progress in security further reinforces that positive climate. It now remains to make progress in the direction indicated in paragraph 2 of Security Council resolution 1576 (2004):

> "... to continue to explore actively all possible ways to include in the democratic and electoral process those who currently remain outside the transition process but have rejected violence".

With the support of MINUSTAH, the Provisional Electoral Council benefited from the important and generous contribution of the Federal Electoral Institute of Mexico, which during the last week of November carried out an intense training programme, with the cooperation of its peers from El Salvador, the Dominican Republic, Panama and Venezuela. The Provisional Electoral Council has completed preparation of the electoral law following, in a gesture of unprecedented openness, the submission of that text for discussion among all public, social and political sectors of the country. The Organization of American States will begin voter registration in March in cooperation with MINUSTAH.

We view with great hope the political decision of the provisional President of Haiti, Mr. Boniface Alexandre, to promote national dialogue during the course of this year. As he has indicated, all sectors of society and all political forces of Haiti without exclusion must take part in that process and shoulder their respective historic responsibilities. In effect, the dialogue must be freely conducted and developed by the Haitians. It is for them, in a climate of mutual respect, to envisage the reconstruction of a community marked by profound social divisions, to deal with the reconstruction of institutions that have been debilitated by the destructive combination of anti-democratic manipulation and corruption, and to revive a political system that had been plagued by political factionalism.

In that context, it is important to welcome the initiative to visit the country and to support the all-inclusive dialogue process on the part of international leaders, such as the Prime Minister of Canada in November, the Secretary of State of the United States on 1 December, the Foreign Minister of Brazil on 20 December and the President of the African Union Commission on 17 December, among others. Their appeals for broader dialogue and reconciliation among Haitians undoubtedly constitutes encouragement for the democrats in the country. I welcome with enthusiasm the upcoming visit to Port-au-Prince of the Foreign Minister of the Argentine Republic this week.

The provisional release of some leaders of Fanmi Lavalas on 23 December 2004 as decreed by the judicial authorities should be interpreted as a step in the right direction. It will make the national dialogue an important factor in the elimination of violence. However, we view with concern the unjustifiable slowness of some trials concerning political leaders. A particularly emblematic case is that of former Prime Minister Yvon Neptune, who has been in prison for almost a year without any sign of a decision by the relevant court.

We also note with concern the fact that human rights are being violated and crimes committed with an apparent link to the Haitian National Police. MINUSTAH is participating and cooperating in daily working operations with the Haitian National Police and is committed to investigating some of those incidents.

Correcting those tendencies will undoubtedly ensure the full credibility of and participation in the dialogue and the electoral process. In the context of the national dialogue, MINUSTAH will play a scrupulous and most respectful facilitating role and fulfil its special commitment to providing technical support, substantive bases and secure conditions for ensuring that the dialogue proceeds without hindrance.

(*spoke in French*)

Concerned by the slow implementation of the interim cooperation framework agreements, and at the initiative of the World Bank, I attended the 15 December

meeting of the Contact Group in Washington, D.C. Allow me to take this opportunity to reiterate the demands that I made at that time. They included the need for the Transitional Government to select a few projects for priority implementation and for the international community to simplify its financing mechanisms to the greatest extent possible in order to allow infrastructure projects to be undertaken in 2005 so as to give hope and work to thousands of Haitians.

In that connection, it is with great satisfaction that I welcome the World Bank's decision to release $73 million, out of a total of $150 million, following the repayment of arrears by the Haitian Transitional Government. I note that the announcement coincided with the decision by the Government of Canada to find the funding necessary to support the electoral process and with the reiteration by the European Union of its pledge of funding. We hope that all participants in the Core Group will be able to help in raising the funds for the elections.

(*spoke in Spanish*)

I commented earlier on the need for ongoing political and economic support for Haiti. Let me conclude with a similar appeal. The process of reintegrating Haiti into the international community, in a framework of internal political stability and democratic freedoms, requires us to make our best and greatest efforts towards its rehabilitation. We all know here that it is ultimately up to the people and Government of Haiti to move forward in the process of national reconciliation.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Valdés for his kind and undeserved words addressed to me.

In accordance with the understanding reached among Council members, I remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than five minutes so that the Council may carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate their texts in writing and to deliver condensed versions when speaking in the Chamber.

I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Haiti.

Mr. Siméon (Haiti) (*spoke in French*): I wish at the outset to convey the sincere congratulations of the Haitian delegation to the Argentine delegation for the highly effective manner in which it is guiding the Council's work this month.

I welcome the presence at this special meeting of Mr. Juan Gabriel Valdés, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and thank him for the relevant and useful information he has just provided on the situation in Haiti. Naturally, we take note of his recommendations, because we know that they emerge from a very clear-sighted understanding of our problems on the part of a man who, now as in the past, has always proven to be a sincere friend of Haiti and demonstrated his solidarity with and understanding of our people.

I convey to the Council the sincere thanks of the Haitian delegation for the convening of this special meeting, which will enable the Council to make a new assessment of the situation in Haiti. The representation of several delegations at a very high level clearly reflects the interest of the international community, and the United Nations in particular, in the political stabilization of Haiti.

Allow me to convey to the delegations of the Governments and peoples, victims of the devastation caused by the recent tsunami, the sympathies of the Government and the people of Haiti. Our feelings of solidarity also go out to the representatives of non-Asian nations that were also struck by that natural disaster.

My delegation also congratulates Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who, in his report contained in document S/2004/908, has made relevant recommendations on reconfiguring the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

At the Council's meeting on Haiti on 29 November 2004, the Secretary-General recommended in his report that the international community make a long-term commitment to Haiti. My delegation believes that the recommendation was fully justified by the fact that the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process already under way is a long-term effort calling for vast resources far in excess of the capacity of a State like Haiti, endowed with limited resources.

The Transitional Government of Haiti duly appreciates the initiatives already undertaken under resolution 1529 (2004) to promote the establishment of a stable and secure climate conducive to economic recovery and preparations for the elections scheduled

for 2005 under the timetable established by the Provisional Electoral Council.

Unfortunately, the security situation in my country, and especially in the working-class neighbourhoods, has deteriorated in recent months. The personnel shortage of the Haitian National Police and the delayed deployment of MINUSTAH troops have complicated efforts to deal with the gangs and to restore order in dangerous areas. Recent weeks, however, have seen a clear improvement thanks to the joint efforts of the National Police and MINUSTAH.

In its desire to establish a stable and secure environment through the disarmament of armed groups, the Government has given special attention to the issue of demobilized military personnel. The commission charged with the management of that matter has been reorganized and strengthened in an effort to make it more effective. We have quickly seen encouraging results. Consequently, many members of Haiti's armed forces received the first instalment of their pensions during the year-end holidays. The process is under way, and we hope soon to be able to provide all former military personnel the full amount of the moneys due them, thereby meeting one of their main demands.

With the assistance of MINUSTAH, the Haitian National Police has peaceably been able to regain control of several police stations illegally occupied by armed groups. All the necessary efforts and resources are being deployed to neutralize the gangs and criminals involved in the pernicious undertaking of destabilization and large-scale terror against the population.

In the area of human rights, the current situation represents a wide-ranging legacy of dictatorship whose political consequences included the disappearance of democratic institutions. Efforts are under way to end impunity, guarantee the independence of the justice system and bring professionalism to the police, thereby establishing an order in which law prevails over violence and force. In that regard, the transition team welcomes the recent release by judicial authorities of a number of detainees who had been held without charges of any sort. Others have been granted provisional release while their cases are investigated.

The provisional President of the Republic and the Transitional Government are well aware of the complexity of the challenges facing Haiti. The interrelated issues of dire poverty, unemployment and illiteracy provide a very fertile breeding ground for a vast range of social excesses and political dealing. The enemies of our country recruit their henchmen and underlings in the poorest environments, skilfully utilizing the distress of the people to attain their sinister political aims. It is therefore vital to thwart those warmongers by promptly putting in place a national economic recovery plan and by improving the living conditions of the people, especially in marginalized areas.

It is truly painful to see that the lack of resources to fund development activities is increasingly compromising the efforts of both the international community and the Government to protect human rights and establish democracy. In that regard, the Transitional Government of Haiti fully supports the Secretary-General's recommendations aimed at quickly meeting the obligations made by lenders to finance the interim cooperation framework. I would therefore like to avail myself of this opportunity to call for understanding on the part of our cooperation partners, which have already demonstrated their determination to help us succeed in the transition, to translate their expressions of solidarity into actions. In that connection, I welcome the initiative of a number of partners, which have already begun to meet the commitments they made at the donors conference held in Washington in July 2004.

The year 2005 will be a crucial one for democracy in Haiti. We are at an important historical crossroads, given the commitment that has been repeatedly voiced by the current governmental team to restore an elected Government by 7 February 2006 that both meets the norms set out in Haiti's 1987 Constitution and the democratic values we all share. In order to do so, the Government is making every effort to facilitate the work of the Provisional Electoral Council. With the swearing in of a new representative from the Catholic Church, the Council has been working at full strength since last week.

We in Haiti have been very pleased to welcome the offers of cooperation made by many of our friends in the international community to ensure that we succeed in that effort. Nevertheless, the scope of the needs continues to be in sharp contrast with the country's limited administrative and financial capacities. We therefore urgently call for substantial support from the international community in that regard. We hope that that support will also include the

deployment of observers to ensure the credibility of the process, and thereby the impartiality of the results.

After the many years of division and bitterness that have gravely damaged the fabric of Haitian society — and given all that entails in terms of social and political instability and frustration among citizens — national reconciliation is now an absolute necessity. We in the Transitional Government are fully aware of that. It is for that reason that the transition team is making every effort to promote the inclusive national dialogue that our fellow citizens and our friends in the international community are fervently calling for. In his new year's message to the nation, our head of State called on all Haitians to set aside their political views and class affiliation and put an end to age-old hatreds in order to take part in that dialogue. We hope that that call will be echoed among all of the country's social groups in order that we may win the battle to save the ship of State. That will necessarily entail success in the political transition, which follows many years of hesitation and evasion.

After two centuries of ineffective political and economic management, the Republic of Haiti is today at the edge of the abyss. Need and abject poverty have reached alarming proportions, and the socio-economic infrastructure is in an advanced state of ruin. We are very pleased that, under the aegis of the United Nations, the international community has come forward to assist us. However, we hope that the international community's commitment to us will not be limited to the political transition alone. Although that is of course a necessary step towards establishing the rule of law and building a society that respects democratic values, a lasting solution to the economic problems facing Haiti entails a more substantial, longer-term commitment on the part of our friends in the international community. More than ever, Haiti needs the support of its bilateral and multilateral partners to assist it to finally emerge from the rut of underdevelopment. On behalf of my delegation, of the Transitional Government of Haiti and of the Haitian people, I therefore express the hope that a consistent and long-term programme of financial and technical assistance will be put in place for Haiti that takes into account the country's real needs in all social, political and economic areas.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Haiti for his kind words addressed to my country.

Mr. Amorim (Brazil) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would first of all like to congratulate you, my dear friend Foreign Minister Rafael Bielsa, on your excellent conduct of our work and, in particular, on the initiative to convene this public meeting on Haiti. I should also like to highlight the exemplary cooperation between our delegations in the Security Council, with the novel inclusion of an Argentine diplomat in the Brazilian delegation. This is unprecedented in the Council, and attests to the degree of trust between our peoples and Governments.

I should also like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ambassador Juan Gabriel Valdés, for the wealth of detailed information that he has provided about the situation in the Caribbean country. I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate to Ambassador Valdés our grateful acknowledgement of his efforts and dedication at the forefront of the work being carried out by the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) — whose military contingent Brazil has the honour to contribute to in a significant way.

The briefing provided by Ambassador Valdés encourages us to continue our work, and I believe his comments about a resolute and level-headed approach in the use of force were truly inspired and should continue to guide our action.

The independence of Haiti — the first country in Latin America to gain its independence — testified to the strength and courage of the millions of Africans who had been transplanted to the Americas as slaves. Since then, for a number of reasons that we have hardly begun to address, the hope embodied by Haiti has not been fulfilled. On the contrary, that brotherly country has occasionally been treated with arrogance, or simply neglected. We — the United Nations, the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean and Haitians themselves — all have a duty to contribute to the fulfilment of that hope.

It is often said that the success of MINUSTAH is based on three interdependent and equally important pillars: the maintenance of law and order, the political dialogue with a view to bringing about national reconciliation, and the promotion of social and economic development. I was happy to hear both the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Foreign Minister of Haiti, my friend Mr. Yvon Siméon, refer to the need to support the three pillars

together. Those are not three distinct or sequential steps. Simultaneous attention to all three pillars is an indispensable prerequisite for the reconstruction of Haiti. The most important ingredients for peace in Haiti, as anywhere, are hope, trust and legitimacy.

Disarmament is a priority in Haiti. But at the same time, we need to create a disarmament mindset — and that requires political dialogue. Stability in Haiti will not be achieved merely by means of repression.

The challenges that we are facing in Haiti are complex. The crucial responsibility of the Government is to create basic conditions, with the help of MINUSTAH, to strengthen the three pillars to which I referred. We welcome the liberation of three politicians from the Fanmi Lavalas as a fundamental step towards involving all Haitians in the effort of national reconstruction. We must persevere on this path.

We encourage all political parties, all the political forces and all civil society organizations and interest groups in Haiti to join together in this national political dialogue, launched by President Boniface Alexandre with the support of the Government of Prime Minister Latortue. The authorities, in turn, must ensure conditions that allow everyone to participate in the political and electoral debate, without having to fear for their safety.

Simple gestures can be important factors for normalizing life in Haiti. The "Match for Peace" — an initiative by the President of Brazil and the Prime Minister of Haiti — which took place in August between the national soccer teams of Brazil and Haiti demonstrated that, despite all the problems and the seriousness of the situation in Haiti, Haitians have lost neither hope nor the capacity to dream.

The progress achieved over the past three months also demonstrated that the pessimistic analysis of MINUSTAH's security capacity was groundless. We should commend MINUSTAH for the proof that it has provided of its ability to reduce violence while continuing, in a level-headed and resolute manner — as Special Representative Gabriel Valdés said — to discharge its mandate, in accordance with resolution 1542 (2004).

As bad as other tragic situations are elsewhere — which we are following closely, such as current events in Asia, where Brazil, like many others, is trying to help, and which deserve an urgent coordinated response from the international community — we must not allow the degree of priority given to Haiti to diminish. If we consider infant mortality rates in Haiti, for example, it is not an exaggeration to say that, over the past two centuries, that brotherly country has suffered the effects of a genuine social and economic tsunami — and the indifference of the world has had a great deal to do with it.

We must combine the various immediate impact projects so as to restore the hope of the poor and unemployed, with the assistance of Haitian institutions, which can also facilitate the planning of a long-term strategy. I am convinced that, working jointly with the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and its Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti will make an important contribution to those goals. As some of those here today know, we have long been promoting, under Article 65 of the Charter, closer cooperation between the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council, which will make it possible to make the provision of assistance by donors and international institutions more transparent. That will be good for everybody, in particular the Government of Haiti, which will be able to make its voice heard in that joint multilateral forum.

As has been said, we must accelerate the disbursement of the pledges made at the donors conference and streamline the procedures. We welcome the release of resources by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, which has opened the way for a restoration of the normal flow of international financing. We cannot allow bureaucratic obstacles and management difficulties, however genuine, to continue to delay the flow of resources. In the case of Haiti, to delay help is to forgo it — perhaps forever.

Under the leadership of President Lula, Brazil has been doing whatever it can to help. On 20 December, as Special Representative Valdés said, we signed three cooperation agreements in Haiti, two of which focus on agriculture, with their own resources and working directly with the Government of Haiti. With the World Bank and the Haitian Government, we also signed an agreement to provide $1 million to feed more than 35,000 schoolchildren. According to the World Bank official who was present, that was the first time that the Bank had signed a cooperation agreement with a developing country to help another developing country. We cannot do a great deal in terms of money and

resources, but we would like this to be a source of inspiration for those with more resources.

At the recent Ouro Preto Summit of the Common Market of the South, I signed, with Enrique Iglesias, President of the Inter-American Development Bank, a memorandum of understanding for the development of technical cooperation projects, which will allow for the use of funds already available to the Bank. With the other Rio Group countries, we have discussed a series of other projects that can be carried out, bilaterally, trilaterally or with the cooperation of other organizations.

The indiscriminate use of natural resources in Haiti has had very serious environmental consequences. A national reforestation campaign, with international cooperation, must be part of any strategy for the sustainable development of Haiti.

The fate of Haiti is inseparable from that of its neighbours. The regional isolation of Haiti is in no one's interest. On our part, since the beginning of the crisis and of our participation in MINUSTAH, we have chosen dialogue with the Caribbean Community as a priority, and we have sent several special missions to its member countries in order to familiarize ourselves with their positions. Last November, I had the opportunity and the honour of meeting with four ministers and other high-level representatives of the Caribbean countries during my visit to Barbados under the coordination of Minister Billie Miller, who is with us today. Today, I will travel to Trinidad and Tobago to continue that dialogue with local authorities.

I wish to say that the terrible crisis that Haiti endured in 2004 brought us together and taught us many lessons regarding our own past and present. That is why in Brazil the question of Haiti is not just a political issue; it is a matter that touches the very soul of the Brazilians.

It is up to the Haitians to re-invent their future. The international community cannot replace them in that task, but it would be irresponsible on our part not to offer all the assistance we can. The peoples of America all owe a great historical debt to Haiti. The world must help the Haitians to recover control over their own security, their own future and their national dignity. I am glad to see that in the presidential statement that we will probably adopt, this long-term participation, this long-term effort, is reaffirmed once again.

The President *(spoke in Spanish)*: I thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Brazil, my much-admired friend, Celso Amorim, for the generous words addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of France, His Excellency Mr. Renaud Muselier.

Mr. Muselier (France) *(spoke in French)*: At the outset, let me thank Minister Rafael Bielsa for having taken the initiative to hold this public debate to address the situation in a country that is particularly close to me and that is linked to France by history and by language. I also wish to commend the presence of the Foreign Minister of Haiti, Mr. Siméon, and the participation of ministers from Brazil, Chile, the Dominican Republic, Barbados and the Bahamas, and of the Under-Secretary of State of the United States.

The progress made in Haiti in a year is remarkable. Where the State and democracy had ceased to function according to acceptable norms, a Transitional Government is preparing to hold democratic elections. Where human rights have been flouted, reform of the legal system is under way. Where arms laid down the law, a disarmament process is under way, as attested by the operations pursued jointly on 14 and 15 December against the Chimères in the Cité Soleil and against the former military personnel in Tabarre.

Progress is due first of all to the strength, courage and resolve of the Haitian people, who are overcoming the difficulties in their history. That progress is also the fruit of remarkable mobilization by the international community. We are pleased to have taken the initiative with the United States, Canada and Chile, with the support of the Security Council. After the emergency, the international community has been able to extend its effort to establish suitable conditions for a democratic transition. The United Nations, regional organizations and countries of the American continent have played and continue to play a key role in this mobilization. That commitment must be maintained over time. We have been called on to do that by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Haiti, Mr. Valdés, to whom I wish to pay a special and friendly tribute. With our full support, he is helping to bring about, with courage and determination and in close cooperation with the Transitional Government of Haiti, a sustainable and successful stabilization. I thank him for his very useful report just presented.

To support those efforts, appropriate coordination of all the players in the international community is indispensable and must be maintained, in particular through the Contact Group in Port-au-Prince, New York or Washington. I would also like to commend the action of the Transitional Government, which in difficult conditions is trying to anchor its country in this process of political and economic reconstruction. It enjoys our full support as it carries out that task. Together we have established a sincere dialogue on the basis of ties of friendship that have always united us, beyond the upsets of history.

In spite of this progress, we must not allow ourselves to be complacent; far from it. I see the ground that still must be covered to achieve the objectives we all seek here — namely, a democratic, united and stable Haiti, on track to sustainable development. It is essential that we all remain mobilized in support of the process we have begun. That is why France is represented today at the Government level at the request of the President of the Republic, Jacques Chirac.

I would like to highlight three aspects that strike me as particularly important for the success of the transition. They are part of the same dynamic.

First is the preparation for and holding of democratic elections in the fall of 2005, as scheduled. This is a unique opportunity for the Haitian people to take the future into their own hands. The conditions must be met so that the voting can take place in satisfactory conditions. The near full-strength deployment of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) since the end of December should help ensure a safe and stable environment. But for that it is also important that the disarmament process be successfully concluded. That is a difficult question, but it must be addressed without concession, not hesitating, if necessary, to make full use of the possibilities allowed under MINUSTAH's mandate. Violence and weapons must not determine Haiti's political future.

On the political front, dialogue and national reconciliation must be continued so that everyone can express their choice on election day. Conditions must be established so that no party feels excluded from the process. All the political parties should take part in the reconciliation, on the condition, naturally, that they reject recourse to violence.

Secondly, reform of public institutions must continue. Reform of the judicial system, training Haiti's national police and promoting human rights must not wait for the elections to be carried out. Restructuring the judicial system and the police force is essential for establishing the rule of law in Haiti. It is also part of the groundwork in the fight against impunity. Let us be clear-sighted: a race against the clock is under way. A strong and sustainable democracy depends not only on credible elections but also on solid and sound institutions.

The third and last point is the establishment of a dynamic for economic development. An interim cooperation framework has been approved. The donors were all present in Washington in July, and then in December. But international support has not been sufficiently in evidence on the ground, in spite of the aid figures that were pledged.

Reconstruction projects must be implemented quickly and must offer the prospect of jobs for Haitians. The Haitian people expect tangible improvements in their daily lives — building roads, replanting trees, access for all to sanitation, clean drinking water and electricity. We need to demonstrate to the Haitian people the benefits of the transition to democracy. They must be given the means to take in hand the reconstruction of their own country. We are counting on the determination of Haiti's leaders. We must be able to count on the determination of the international community.

At this critical juncture we must not fail in our duty of solidarity vis-à-vis the Haitian people, nor disappoint them in the hope for a better future that emerged nearly a year ago. France, with its European Union partners, together with the United Nations and in multilateral forums, will continue to play its full part in supporting the efforts of the Haitian people to set their country on track to recovery. It will remain engaged in MINUSTAH and will continue to place its bilateral action in the interim cooperation framework, focusing on both institutional reconstruction and on strengthening basic services.

It is through comprehensive, coordinated action that we will meet the challenge of attaining peace.

With the tsunami tragedy in Asia, we saw an extraordinary outpouring of solidarity, reflecting a globalization of feelings. Our international engagement does not merely ebb and flow with images of disaster:

our commitment is made over the long term, wherever needs remain pressing. And that is the case of Haiti.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): To optimize the use of our time, I will not individually invite speakers to take seats at the Council table or invite them to resume their seats at the side of the Chamber. When a speaker is taking the floor, the Conference Officer will seat the next speaker on the list at the table.

The next speaker is the Acting Secretary General of the Organization of American States, His Excellency Mr. Luigi R. Einaudi, on whom I now call.

Mr. Einaudi (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank you, Mr. President, and, through you, the Argentine Republic for having convened this meeting and for having shouldered leadership responsibilities including that of hosting next November's Summit of the Americas.

(*spoke in English*)

Haiti is a founding member of the Organization of American States (OAS), and the organization has been particularly active in Haiti over the past 15 years. Yesterday we had the honour of receiving Juan Gabriel Valdés in our Permanent Council, and we had one of the best discussions of the situation in Haiti and of the needs facing the country with regard to the holding of good elections.

To represent the Permanent Council, I am accompanied today by its Vice-Chairman, Joshua Sears. I wish simply to say that we are very pleased to be able to be here.

Our most recent mandate from our own General Assembly refers to support for the elections, for the institutional strengthening of the Haitian State and for the defence of human rights, all in cooperation with the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and the United Nations as a whole. In fact, in the first days of November, Under-Secretary-General Prendergast and I were able to sign a memorandum of understanding which gave the OAS the lead in the voter registration process. I am very pleased to say that we have received a transfer of $8.7 million from the Government of the United States — to which I convey my thanks — for the undertaking of that work.

Let me make just a few very simple points. The first one is that good elections — that is to say, open, participative, non-exclusive elections in which the people can vote and have their votes counted and respected — are central to democratic stability and legitimacy in Haiti. I think there is absolutely no doubt of that among any of us.

The second is that that will not be easy to achieve. There are specific obstacles when one starts trying to organize good elections. I will say that I personally have spent almost four years working with the Haitian Government to exactly those ends, and with the same, so to speak, preaching: that we need to include the opposition. Oppositions, at times, have changed; needs remain very similar. It is very clear that, if Haiti is to avoid going from crisis to crisis, it needs — and the international community needs — to develop a programme of broad support for State institutions.

In that sense, the effort that the OAS is undertaking in Haiti is, I think, an extremely interesting one. Our objective is to contribute to the institutional development of Haiti and to the credibility of democracy in Haiti. That means that we have developed as careful a programme of electoral registration as we could. We are still refining it, together with the electoral experts of MINUSTAH and with the Haitian Provisional Electoral Council. It is one that will draw on excellent knowledge from within the hemisphere.

It is interesting to note that five countries — Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Peru and Uruguay — have contributed, I believe, about 80 per cent of the personnel for the stabilization force. Well, I would say that there is something close to that — together with the support of the United States, Canada and Mexico and that of some smaller countries such as Panama and Paraguay — in the support for national electoral tribunals, with strong support, again, from Brazil, in the establishment of personnel, rules, relationships and abilities to bring the best technical capability to bear.

We have tried to develop a system, which will begin operating in March, that will not be sui generis and "floating in the air" but which will contribute to institutional development by being tied to, and facilitating, the development of the civil registry of Haiti, which is an important institution and an important need in all of our countries. Having the legal right of existence is the start of human rights and of the ability to advance. We would like to help contribute to

the inclusion of as many as possible of the 4.5 million Haitians whom we propose to register, in a way that ensures that their registration will not just serve for a one-time election, but will provide the beginning of that basis for life — to which, I think, we are all committed.

That will not be easy. There are problems of infrastructure, of security and of voter education that will need to be handled. Let me simply say that I think that this is a critical moment. Our technicians — the OAS technicians and the technicians of the United Nations working with Juan Gabriel Valdés — are looking at and scrubbing the numbers one more time in close cooperation with the Provisional Electoral Council of Haiti. I believe that the Member States of the United Nations, certainly the member States of the OAS, and our observers, which have been very generous with us, will be receiving further indications of the financial support necessary to make that process work effectively.

I believe the Haitian situation is a unique historical situation. I also think it is surprisingly representative of a phenomenon on the international scene in which we live. But it is very difficult for local authorities to do things well in a globalized world without international support, and it is very difficult for the international community to achieve things if it is not capable of enlisting the support of the local authorities. As Minister Amorim said, the needs are long-term, but I think the challenge of legitimizing the political situation and increasing the confidence of Haitians and of the international community is a very immediate challenge.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Acting Secretary General of the Organization of American States for the kind words he addressed to my country.

The next speaker is His Excellency Mr. Ignacio Walker, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Chile. I now give him the floor.

Mr. Walker (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): We particularly thank the Argentine Republic for the timely convening of this open debate on Haiti. Likewise, we congratulate its Minister for Foreign Affairs, our dear friend Rafael Bielsa, on that important initiative and wish him every success in the presidency of the Security Council. We also want to thank Ambassador Juan Gabriel Valdés, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Chile, for the comprehensive report he provided us this morning. In addition, we welcome the presence of Ambassador Luigi Einaudi, Acting Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS), and commend him for the presentation we just heard.

Undoubtedly, this is an excellent opportunity to renew the international community's commitment to ensuring the success of the peace mission in Haiti and to assessing the efforts already undertaken, so that we do not repeat the errors of the past. This time, the United Nations must not fail in Haiti. We must establish clear political objectives and accelerate institutional and economic rehabilitation as a fundamental condition for the restoration of sustainable stability in this brotherly State.

As members are aware, Chile, mindful that it was imperative to prevent a humanitarian emergency in Haiti, participated very early on in the Multinational Interim Force and immediately joined MINUSTAH. We did so and are doing so in the understanding that only a comprehensive, multidimensional and long-term peace operation will make possible the political, economic and social rehabilitation of the country. Latin America's significant participation in MINUSTAH attests to a collective political will to help resolve the problems of our region in the context of maintaining international peace and security, as we reaffirmed at the most recent meeting of the Rio Group, on 5 November.

During our tenure as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, we stressed the fundamental principles that we believe should govern the political transition in Haiti: convening a broad-based national dialogue, without any exclusion, that will promote national reconciliation; holding transparent and free elections in 2005, with international supervision; full respect for human rights; observance of the norms of due process; disarming paramilitary groups; and putting an end to impunity.

Although progress in creating a climate of security has been relatively slow — particularly in the beginning, as a result of the difficulties in bringing the MINUSTAH contingent up to full strength — we now note with satisfaction that there has been substantive progress in that area in the past two months, which was made clear in the Special Representative's

comprehensive briefing this morning. That has made it possible to carry out joint operations that have included United Nations military and police forces in coordination with the inadequate local police forces. In that context, we believe it is essential to rebuild and strengthen the Haitian police as a professional and depoliticized institution that proves itself worthy of the people's trust by operating with respect for human rights and the rule of law.

Another important aspect of achieving social peace has been the search for an effective response to the social demands of members of the disbanded armed forces. Their reintegration into the work force is an issue that requires priority attention in the context of an effective commitment to the rule of law and a clear, categorical rejection of violence.

Just as reintegration is an imperative task, it is essential that it be accompanied by a process of disarmament not only of former soldiers, but of Haitian society as a whole. That is a basic prerequisite for restoring confidence.

We also believe that, without a political process that brings together all sectors of Haitian society to reach a governance pact, it will not be possible to achieve sustainable peace and security. That is why we have always stressed the urgent need to generate a dialogue among all the relevant political forces — including the Fanmi Lavalas party — so as to achieve a basic consensus. Only then can there be legitimate elections in Haiti to elect its new authorities. We recognize that that is a matter for Haitians to decide. MINUSTAH and OAS will provide technical support and act as facilitators to create substantive security conditions that will make it possible to hold free, secret and informed elections. We reiterate our appeal to the Transitional Government of Haiti to take all necessary steps to ensure the normal development of this political and electoral process.

In the past 11 years, the international community's efforts in Haiti have led to ephemeral successes, which has obliged us to take up the task again and again. Therefore, we believe that, together with the Haitian society and Government, we should address the causes of those repeated failures. In that connection, we believe that the strengthening of State institutions is the foundation for a national reconciliation and reconstruction process.

When we say "no more impunity", that must be supported by a strengthened and reformed judicial and prison system. When we reject violence, we must develop institutions that can effectively restrain it. When we speak of national reconciliation, we need to strengthen political parties and civil society organizations that will serve as tools for channelling the people's demands through a democratic system.

No political process will seem credible to a population that is malnourished and wracked by abject poverty and chronic unemployment. It is, therefore, of capital importance to design short- and long-term development projects that will help to objectively improve the living conditions of the Haitian people. We must begin with basic, specific projects that will be valued by the people and that will promote a positive perception of the international community's action in Haiti. In that connection, we want to reiterate very strongly, in this forum, our appeal to donor countries and the international financial organizations to release, without delay and with greater flexibility and urgency, the resources pledged to Haiti at the Washington donor conference held in July 2004. Perhaps we must communicate, in this forum, at this meeting, our sense of urgency with regard to those financial resources.

Chile and Ecuador have sent a contingent of engineers to carry out road infrastructure projects. We are facing a paradoxical situation, because we have qualified personnel and adequate machinery, but we are having serious difficulties in finding the financial resources and procuring the basic supplies needed to implement specific projects. That has caused the venture to focus on secondary tasks, which is surely also happening with other cooperation projects.

As a Government, we have invested $20 million in equipping that engineering corps and in military equipment, but at present we are carrying out only a $100,000 project. Resources and capacities are available, but they are underutilized because of a lack of financial resources. It is necessary further to clarify the priorities set out in the interim cooperation framework and to establish expedited processes to enable international organizations and donors to contribute to MINUSTAH. We therefore urge the Transitional Government to continue to work on specific economic development projects, with emphasis on the provision of basic services. From that perspective, we deem it of the greatest importance that MINUSTAH have the capacity to administer quick-impact projects.

Finally, I should like to reiterate our willingness to help ensure that the rehabilitation of Haiti, to which we all are committed, facilitates the functioning of solid and effective democratic institutions in a context of economic development and social equity. We must be clear, at the level of the United Nations and at that of the financial institutions, that this is a fundamental political objective to which our actions and projects must be geared.

To the extent that we all can, in accordance with our respective capacities to cooperate in carrying out that task, we will be working for a lasting peace and stability. That will require a sustained effort over time as well as perseverance in our actions. We cannot allow a recurrence of the cycle of crisis and indifference that has characterized the relationship of the international community to Haiti throughout history.

We invite the Council to adopt a forward-looking approach, because only in that way can we can help to ensure that the Haitian people can once again aspire to a future of democracy and dignity.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Minister Ignacio Walker for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to me and to my country.

The next speaker on my list is the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic, Mr. Carlos Morales Troncoso.

Mr. Morales Troncoso (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your presiding over the Council this month, and I should like also to thank your country for the welcome initiative to convene this special meeting on a topic of such great importance to our region.

Today I have the honour of addressing the Security Council to convey my Government's position on the situation in Haiti — a nation with which my country, the Dominican Republic, shares the territory of the island of Hispaniola.

The historical, geographic, political and social relationship between the Dominican Republic and the Republic of Haiti is a source of mandatory solidarity between our peoples. As a result, the Dominican people are not indifferent to the poverty and despair or to the recurring episodes of violence that have so deeply affected the well-being of the people of Haiti and threatened the viability of the Haitian State. We are convinced that it is urgent — and I emphasize "urgent" — that we adopt effective measures to arrest the accelerated process of disintegration that seems to afflict Haitian society.

In Haiti, which is characterized by a context of extreme and generalized poverty and an atmosphere of violence and intransigence, the Government has been unable to cope with the most urgent problems facing the population or — as aptly noted earlier by Mr. Juan Gabriel Valdés — to deal with the dysfunctions in the legal system, Parliament and the security forces.

We must help our sister republic of Haiti. We must make every effort to restore the rule of law and to develop and strengthen institutions and electoral processes — as was so rightly pointed out this morning, particularly by the Acting Secretary General of the Organization of American States — and we also have to create the foundations for good governance and improve the general standard of living.

We have come here, Sir, in response to your kind invitation in order clearly to express our solidarity with the other nations of Latin American and Caribbean and with the efforts of the Security Council, which, even as we speak, are together firmly committing themselves to cooperate with efforts to stabilize Haiti in order to guarantee the restoration and preservation of its institutions.

Our foreign policy has consistently expressed its solidarity with Haiti and called for generous international assistance to help its people, crushed as they are by poverty and requiring all types of humanitarian assistance on an emergency basis.

In keeping with that position, our Government has taken action at the national and international levels aimed at preventing the gradual fragmentation of Haitian society, in hopes of promoting and strengthening tolerance and solidarity among the main actors in public life in that country.

The main guidelines of our initiative are to directly or indirectly contact and persuade the leaders of the various sectors of Haitian society to reconcile their differences, to promote reciprocal respect, and to coordinate activities that will sow the seeds for the future and that will serve as an example to promote national unity and integrity.

The Dominican Government is convinced that this type of institutional initiative — at both the public

and private levels — will motivate and convince those Haitian leaders who have the capacity to influence others and help them change the opinions of those who are currently acting in an isolated and bellicose manner.

The overarching commitment of the international community towards Haiti must be aimed at achieving the reconciliation of the various elements of Haitian society, so that its leaders can move from confrontation to cooperation and begin the economic reconstruction of the country, in order to relieve the crushing poverty of its people — an extreme example of survival in a context of far-reaching and longstanding social injustice on a territory experiencing an advanced degree of erosion and desertification.

To achieve those lofty goals, we need what we have consistently asked for and what all previous speakers have requested: a long-term commitment on the part of the international community to provide massive, sustained and timely assistance on the part of developed nations, as clearly underscored by Minister Celso Amorim of Brazil, as well as international solidarity that is strong enough to overcome Haiti's problems.

In that respect, as proposed by President Leonel Fernández, our country is planning a ministerial summit, to be held in Santo Domingo, aimed at strengthening the joint actions of donors and those countries participating in the peace mission to Haiti.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic for the kind words he addressed to me and to my country.

The next speaker is the Senior Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Barbados, The Honourable Dame Billie Miller, to whom I give the floor.

Dame Billie Miller (Barbados): The Caribbean Community deeply appreciates this opportunity to address the Security Council on the situation in Haiti.

One year ago, we were all gravely concerned about deteriorating political and security conditions in Haiti. With Haitian agreement and international support, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) launched a diplomatic initiative. Underpinned by the principles of democracy and good governance enshrined in the CARICOM Charter of Civil Society and the Inter-American Democratic Charter, the CARICOM initiative sought the following: to stabilize the political situation through a power-sharing arrangement; to avoid the repetition of the traditional Haitian practice of getting rid of the President by any means in order to resolve political conflict; and to help the Haitians find a pacific and political solution that would preserve the rule of law and constitutional continuity.

Unfortunately, on 29 February 2004, the quick fix was in and principles thrown out. CARICOM heads of Government were disappointed by the reluctance of the Security Council to take immediate action in response to appeals for assistance from the Government of Haiti and to the request of the Caribbean Community. The elected President departed the country in circumstances still to be elucidated. An interim administration was subsequently put in place using some of the elements outlined in the CARICOM Prior Action Plan.

In the view of CARICOM, the fundamental tenets of democratic practice and behaviour have been compromised. We cannot vacillate on principles since they are essential to our security as small States. Continuing violations of the principles laid down in the CARICOM Charter of Civil Society have made it impossible for the Community to receive representatives of Haiti in its councils. The interim administration must be held to internationally recognized standards with regard to respect for fundamental civil and political rights, due process and the rule of law. Allegations of egregious abuses at the hands of the police must be fully investigated. The prolonged detention of Fanmi Lavalas leaders and activists without trial or charges can only be construed as arbitrary detention on the basis of political affiliation. Such persons should be released forthwith. That serious breach of fundamental rights is exacerbated by a persistent failure to prosecute the rebels for their criminal activity. Such an approach also hinders the establishment of an enabling political climate, without which peace and security cannot be sustained.

CARICOM remains committed to the people of Haiti. To that end, the Caribbean Community has put in place mechanisms such as an assistance programme, of which electoral support is a key component.

Now, one year later, the deep concerns of the regional and international communities have increased. We have been hearing references to that this morning. The inability of the interim administration to promote

stability and political inclusiveness has been a stumbling block to progress. Insecurity and volatility persist. The lot of ordinary Haitians has not improved. The traditional clamour for a change in government is once again being raised. Hopelessness and joblessness combine with the easy availability of weapons to fill the ranks of the illegally armed groups that proliferate on both sides of the divide. Their activities, whether criminal or political in intent, subvert the authority of the State and must be curtailed. Instability has an adverse effect on Haiti's neighbours as well, including the Bahamas and Jamaica, as it spurs illegal immigration and, increasingly, trafficking in small arms and drugs.

The November report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAN) (S/2004/908) rightly underlines the need for increasing the capacity of the Stabilization Mission to implement disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. That must be a priority. Those who foment and engage in violence must be prosecuted.

The disbursement of donor pledges is urgently required to help alleviate the desperate social and economic situation. It is to be hoped that the recent release of funds by the World Bank will be replicated by other major donors. Coherence and mutual reinforcement among the humanitarian, security, political and developmental strategies must also be ensured. Those strategies must also be informed by the harsh realities of the Haitian environment.

Free and fair elections are pivotal to returning to constitutional rule. They are, however, only a critical way station on the long and arduous road to stability, recovery and a viable democracy. It is clear that the daunting prerequisites for credible elections later this year are not yet entirely within grasp. Our joint and urgent task must be to help create a secure environment that permits open campaigning; to help ensure a political climate that facilitates the participation of all political groups that reject violence, including those currently outside the political and electoral process; and to help establish an effective administrative structure to conduct proper elections.

As the difficulties of the transition process mount, the concepts of national dialogue and bridge-building are being increasingly advocated from within Haiti. Domestic attempts to make the idea of bringing together a representative cross-section of Haitian society a reality must be encouraged. In that connection, the Caribbean Community commends the exploratory efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

Defusing tensions, identifying common and unifying interests, promoting inclusiveness and building confidence are urgently required societal building blocks. They could facilitate a way forward on sensitive and contentious issues such as security, disarmament, development paths and priorities and elections. But ultimately, responsibility for creating favourable conditions for reconciliation, recovery and stability lies with the citizens of Haiti themselves.

The building of democracy in Haiti and the creation of a stable political, social and economic order require the long-term commitment of the Haitians and their partners in the international community. The Caribbean Community salutes the key role played by Latin American States within MINUSTAH, as well as by the other contributing States. It also recognizes the supportive efforts of the Organization of American States. As circumstances permit, CARICOM makes its own contribution to the stabilization and rebuilding efforts of the United Nations in the sister country of Haiti.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The next speaker is the Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs of the United States, His Excellency Mr. Roger Noriega, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Noriega (United States of America): The United States appreciates Argentina's initiative to focus the Council's attention on Haiti. The United States stands committed to our collective effort to improve stability, strengthen the rule of law, consolidate representative democracy through elections and lay the foundation for long-term economic recovery and growth in Haiti. The international community has responded to the crisis in Haiti with a coordinated effort to establish security and promote political reconciliation. I wish to highlight the contributions of Brazil, Argentina and other western hemisphere countries to this important and worthy effort.

As the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) approaches its fully authorized strength, it has demonstrated that it has the will and the wherewithal to improve the security conditions of the Haitian people, consistent with its mandate. Since it

intensified such operations in December to confront gang activities and to defend the rule of law in the capital city, Port-au-Prince, MINUSTAH has made significant, important progress in augmenting security in the Haitian capital's most impoverished neighbourhoods.

We call upon the international community and the interim Government to work in concert on a comprehensive programme to disarm, demobilize and reintegrate into productive society all irregular forces and irregular armed groups in Haiti. Also, we encourage the international community and the interim Government to focus on building an effective civilian police force to improve security and to protect the rights, lives and property of all Haitians.

Security and development are inseparable. The improved security climate offers the opportunity to deliver on our collective commitment to helping to bring real political and economic recovery and growth to Haiti. At the World Bank donor's conference last July in Washington, D.C., the international community pledged more than $1 billion to help Haiti. The United States is delivering on its commitment to Haiti, spending over $113 million on economic development, health care, jobs and disaster relief in 2004, which accounts for approximately half of the international community's donations to Haiti for that year. We expect to spend well over $150 million in Haiti during the course of this year.

It is important to remember that pledges alone will not improve Haiti's conditions. We must work to overcome the bureaucratic hurdles in each of our Governments and institutions to disburse the funds that we pledged at last year's conference. Haitian authorities should redouble their efforts to identify concrete projects and to accept appropriate technical advisors and support to implement those programmes in an urgent fashion. Similarly, we call upon donors to intensify their efforts to remove any bureaucratic hurdles to projects that would improve the lot of average Haitians today and give them precious hope for the future.

We support efforts by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and MINUSTAH, consistent with the mandate provided in Security Council resolutions 1542 (2004) and 1576 (2004), to join with other United Nations organs, the international financial institutions and Member States to assist the interim Government of Haiti in designing and implementing those urgent, high-impact projects for the recovery and development of Haiti.

During his visit to Haiti last month, Secretary of State Colin Powell consulted with Haitian authorities and representatives of civil society about the need for a broad national dialogue in Haiti. We believe that any party in Haiti that accepts democratic principles and rejects the path of violence should have a place at the table in such a dialogue. We commend MINUSTAH's efforts in support of that process.

Such a dialogue represents an important step towards inclusive, free and fair elections this fall and national reconciliation in the long run. My Government is pleased to support the work of the Organization of American States (OAS) and the United Nations in helping Haiti to prepare for those elections. The United States has contributed some $9 million to that effort through the OAS and another $1.25 million through our bilateral assistance programmes. We understand that the election effort will require substantial additional funds for voter education, infrastructure improvements and security. To ensure successful elections, we strongly encourage donors to give generously to that effort.

In conclusion, those of us who are fortunate enough to have persons of Haitian origin in our communities know them to be extraordinarily talented and industrious. For that reason, if we meet our commitment to working together to strengthen a Government that empowers and protects all citizens of Haiti, there is good reason to be hopeful about Haiti's future.

Sir Emyr Jones Parry (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom very much appreciates your presence in the Chair, Sir, and the contributions already made in this debate.

I should like to associate myself with the statement to be delivered later by the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union.

We all owe a debt to the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti for the work that has been done under difficult conditions, including limited personnel and the devastation caused by tropical storm Jeanne. I would like to express our particular thanks to Special Representative of the Secretary-General Juan

Gabriel Valdés for his contribution, to the Brazilian force commander, to the Canadian police commissioner and to all troop-contributing countries.

The debate has focused on three priority issues, and they are the obvious ones for a post-conflict State. First is the need for a political evolution towards a democratic end State and for elections, which Minister Miller described as a critical way station on the path to democracy. Secondly, there is the need to create a secure State in which, eventually, the responsibility for law and order will rest with the Haitians. Thirdly, there is the need for economic development, which must go hand in hand with the others in order to improve the living conditions of the people of Haiti. Those three objectives require a coordinated delivery of services by the United Nations and its agencies on the ground in the country, reinforced by the neighbours, the regional organizations and bilateral donors.

The United Kingdom fully supports the Transitional Government. It is important that all necessary effort be made to move towards a lasting, secure and stable environment in Haiti. In order to achieve that, it is essential that all democratic elements in the country have the opportunity to participate in the transitional process and the elections, including those members of the Lavalas party who have renounced violence.

The United Kingdom Government remains concerned by the human rights situation in Haiti. It is essential that those individuals who are and have been involved in human rights violations not have any place within the Government or associated bodies. Establishing an effective and respected Haitian National Police force, the officers of which are subject to thorough vetting, will be an important step towards improving that human rights record.

On security, as others have said, further steps are needed, especially on disarmament, demobilization and — the key element — the reintegration process. Disarming the gangs that operate throughout much of Haiti is crucial for the creation of a stable future.

Through the United Kingdom Department for International Development, we are financing development activities in Haiti and, of course, we support Haiti through the European Union and World Bank programmes. The long-term commitment of us all to Haiti is essential for a successful future, and in that regard we particularly welcome the assistance of the regional organizations and the cooperation of neighbouring countries, as we have heard today.

If I may, however, I should like to end by saying that Haiti should serve as a potent and salutary example to us. Its problems in the 1990s necessitated a major United Nations operation, but we did not stay long enough to achieve durable success. This time, the United Nations and the international community need to stay the course. But more generally, the United Nations and the Security Council need better to address impending threats before they become a reality in individual countries. We need to give a higher profile to the work on conflict prevention and to support those countries at real risk of instability. Hence, the importance for all of us of the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, with its proposal for a more a coherent approach by the entire United Nations family to the range of issues which actually comprise the conflict spectrum. I very much hope that that work, too — like progress on Haiti — can develop in 2005.

Mr. Motoc (Romania): It is a privilege to see the Foreign Minister of Argentina playing such an important role in the preparation, convening and conduct of this important meeting of the Security Council. We are honoured by the presence of the Foreign Minister of Haiti, of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Haiti, the acting Secretary-General of the Organization of American States (OAS) and of those members of the Council and countries from the region with ministerial representation today.

The initiative of the Argentine presidency of the Security Council to organize this open debate is welcome and timely. Haiti is a test case for the United Nations, and for the Council in particular. What it comes down to is our very ability to sustain or foster a long-term, multidimensional, integrated investment in durably addressing the political, security and economic challenges of complex post-conflict situations. Romania has always believed in encouraging involvement and participation in such tasks on the part of regional and subregional institutions, while carrying out an ongoing dialogue with the Council and the United Nations. That has also been echoed in the relevant findings and recommendations of the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change.

Romania aligns itself with the statement to be made shortly by the Permanent Representative of

Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union. I will therefore try to be brief and specific in my remarks.

First, I would like to join other speakers in supporting the fundamental vision on which our debate today is predicated, namely, that of a close interrelationship between security, political institutionalization and economic development in Haiti. The stabilization and development of Haiti are not easy tasks, but they are within reach, provided that consistent and coordinated efforts are resolutely undertaken in all three areas I have just mentioned.

Like others, we believe that improving security in Haiti remains one of the core issues, as it is a pre-condition for the achievement of a wide range of objectives being pursued in Haiti — such as the creation of an environment conducive to democratic elections, the consolidation of State institutions, the fostering of national dialogue and improving the economic situation. The persistent violence perpetrated by illegal armed groups constitutes an extremely worrying sign of the many dangers that continue to threaten this severely tested country. Such violence can undermine ongoing stabilization efforts and disrupt the transition process. We support the efforts of the Transitional Government to curb violence while observing universally recognized human rights and the standards of the rule of law.

The role of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) in upholding Government efforts to bring about peace and reconciliation in the country remains decisive. We commend troop-contributing countries for their investment in that operation. They did deliver on their commitment to deploy the Mission in a timely manner throughout Haiti's regions.

We are encouraged by the recent large-scale joint operation conducted by MINUSTAH and the Haitian National Police in the troubled districts of Port-au-Prince. Further action of that kind is still needed as a matter of urgency to continue to redress the current security situation.

Romania also acknowledges the difference that an effective disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programme would make to the overall improvement of the security picture. That is the reason for our call for the establishment without further delay of a national commission responsible for carrying out a comprehensive, country-wide DDR programme.

On the political front, we are encouraged by the commitment of the Transitional Government to organize elections in 2005 and to ensure the subsequent transfer of power by February 2006. The decisions of the Provisional Electoral Council regarding the timing and budget for elections should lead to greater clarity with regard to the schedule for the transitional period and the needs associated with international assistance for elections. In that regard, Romania welcomes the signing on 10 January of the global accord on an important assistance project for elections by the Government of Haiti, MINUSTAH, the United Nations Development Programme and the Provisional Electoral Council. The assistance pledged on that occasion aimed at covering the most immediate aspects of the elections is new evidence of a strong international commitment to the holding of free and fair elections. It also attests to the good cooperation prevailing among international and local partners in Haiti. We look forward to an inclusive political process, without which — as rightly asserted in the latest report of the Secretary-General — no sustainable peace and security can be achieved.

As always, Romania attaches great importance to combating impunity and to the due observance of human rights by all parties. Arbitrary detentions should stop without delay. The Transitional Government must release those against whom no charges have yet been brought, and bring to justice those responsible for human rights violations. Accordingly, reforming the judiciary has to be a high priority in Haiti.

As a country that promotes cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, Romania remains supportive of enhanced involvement on the part of regional organizations in efforts aimed at stabilization and development in Haiti. The streamlined working relationship between the United Nations and the Organization of American States (OAS) in Haiti once again demonstrates the political weight and effective impact of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in stabilization processes, which is a theme that Romania is attempting to pursue in the course of its mandate as an elected member of the Council.

The stabilization and development of Haiti was strengthened with the recent establishment of the Core Group on Haiti. A positive development has been the use of the cooperation architecture employed there in the area of electoral assistance. We also welcome the

recent signing of a memorandum of understanding between the United Nations and OAS on coordination of electoral assistance to Haiti, as well as the indications of increased cooperation between MINUSTAH and the International Organization of la Francophonie and other relevant organizations and partners involved in the electoral process.

In fostering functioning democracy in Haiti, it is of the utmost importance that development projects are launched and implemented with the help of the United Nations, international financial institutions and Member States. Such projects have to be "quick starters" and have an immediate impact on the living conditions of the population, for there can hardly be democracy in a country where the basic needs of the population are not fully provided for. Accordingly, we agree with the need to establish a long-term development strategy for Haiti with the assistance of the international community, as reflected in the interim cooperation framework. We also welcome the recent decision by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to provide emergency assistance for Haiti's recovery in support of the Government's efforts to deliver urgently needed basic services to the population.

Finally, I would like to conclude by restating our conviction that the structural instability in Haiti requires a long-term commitment and a multidimensional approach that is based on the lessons learned from the past and on addressing the core causes of instability, including the economic and social dimensions. The efforts of the Transitional Government, the meaningful and effective involvement of the United Nations through MINUSTAH and a wide range of other bodies of the United Nations system, and the impressive regional cooperation developed in support of Haiti are important steps towards moving further towards the day when Haiti regains its rightful place among the stable, prosperous and democratic States of the world. The proposed mission of the Security Council to Haiti — possibly in conjunction with a similar mission by the Economic and Social Council's Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti — would also be a step in that direction.

Lastly, allow me to restate what I said in the beginning, namely, that we feel very privileged to have you, Mr. President, preside over this important meeting of the Council.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of Romania for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Vassilakis (Greece): I would first like to welcome your presence, Mr. President, at this debate and to congratulate you on your assumption of your duties as President for the month of January. I wish you every success in your tenure. In that regard, I would also like to congratulate you for your innovative choice of this particular item for an open debate. I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome the Foreign Minister of Haiti to our deliberations, as well as to say that I look forward to a fruitful discussion and conclusion of our meeting today.

Greece fully associates itself with the statement to be made later in the debate by the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union.

On the surface, it would appear that there is not much that links Greece and Haiti together; one would be forgiven for thinking that the two countries are worlds apart. However, I would like to draw the Council's attention to the fact that Haiti was the first country to recognize the Greek revolution and the creation of the modern Greek State nearly two centuries ago — something which the Greek people remember to this day. It is only fitting, therefore, that the very first day of Greece's membership of the Security Council — 1 January — coincided with Haiti's national day, and that Greece is addressing the Security Council at a public meeting, for the first time as a non-permanent member, on the situation in Haiti.

Haiti has been through much in recent years and has endured a great deal of suffering, not least as a result of the natural disasters that have hit the island. The international community has shown — and I believe it will continue to show — support for the Haitian people so that they may realize their aspirations in a secure and stable environment.

The Greek Government expresses its support for the efforts of the Transitional Government in supporting the political process of national dialogue and reconciliation. It is important that this dialogue continue unhindered, with the participation of all sides, so that a substantial proportion of the electorate can participate in the forthcoming local, legislative and presidential elections.

The priority should be to improve the security situation on the ground. That will not only have beneficial results with respect to the disbursement of economic assistance, but also pave the way for long-term development, which is currently facing obstacles, and help to minimize human rights violations. A positive step towards improving the security situation would be a more vigorous approach on the part of the Transitional Government of Haiti in pursuing the goals of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and in setting up the relevant national commission without further delay. The melange of criminal gangs, local militias and disbanded army and other groups still rampaging through the streets of Haiti must come to an end. We encourage the Transitional Government to promote the rule of law and good governance, as well as to put an end to impunity. We also believe that Haiti's constitution must be respected and preserved.

It is imperative that the United Nations stand firmly by Haiti's side in the crucial months ahead so as to ensure that a credible and viable process of political and economic rehabilitation is put in place, starting with the installation of a democratic Government elected after fair and free elections.

Long-term involvement is also essential for the success of United Nations efforts in the country and, in that regard, Greece welcomes the efforts of the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Haiti, Ambassador Valdés. I thank him for the clarity of his briefing this morning.

Greece also extends its appreciation to the countries participating in the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and notes with satisfaction that both the military and the civilian police components have already reached their full strength. MINUSTAH should now be in a better position to implement its mandate. Our appreciation is also extended to each and every individual participating in the Mission. We utterly condemn all attacks against MINUSTAH and other international personnel, especially those carrying out humanitarian tasks.

The long-term prosperity of Haiti cannot be achieved without addressing the root causes of human suffering in the country. Poverty continues to plague the great majority of the population, and the only way to reverse the situation is by promoting long-term economic development. In that regard, Greece welcomes the reactivation of the Economic and Social Council's Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti. Likewise, we welcome the creation of the Core Group. We also thank the Organization of American States for its involvement, especially in the field of voter registration.

In the same context, we are encouraged to see that the donors conference, which took place in Washington in July 2004, has so far generated over $1 billion in reconstruction aid.

Greece is doing its part within the European Union context. In addition, Greece has recently pledged bilateral assistance to Haiti in an effort to help the country face its most immediate needs.

Nevertheless, it will be even more encouraging to see the timely disbursement of donor funds to a people much in need. We therefore call upon those involved — the donors, the international financial institutions and the Transitional Government — to put forward, as soon as possible, plans for specific projects that will benefit from the donors' generous contributions.

In closing, I would like to assure the Foreign Minister of Haiti that Greece stands ready to assist Haiti on its path to stability and normalcy, both on a bilateral level and through multilateral forums, such as the United Nations and the European Union.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of Greece for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Oshima (Japan): I should like first of all to say that, as one of the new elected members of the Security Council, which include Argentina, Japan looks forward to working closely with the delegation of Argentina, as well as with other members of the Council, in the coming months. I should also like to say that my delegation feels privileged to see the Foreign Minister of Argentina presiding over today's meeting.

We commend the strong commitment and the active and ceaseless efforts of the countries of Latin America and the Organization of American States in taking the lead to deal with the situation in Haiti, which is on our agenda today. I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ambassador Valdés, for his comprehensive and enlightening briefing. We commend the efforts of Ambassador Valdés and his team in the multifaceted United Nations

Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) for securing safety, promoting stability and undertaking many activities in a variety of areas, including humanitarian and electoral support, development aid, civil affairs and others. I also pay respect to all the countries concerned, especially the Latin American countries, which have contributed significantly to the Mission in Haiti by providing personnel, technical expertise and financial resources, as well as political and moral support.

Haiti presents yet another example of a country where the fundamental issue of the interlinkage between development and peace arises. A combination of widespread poverty and joblessness in society, disease, weak or failing governance and institutions, social injustice, corruption and so forth, and the resultant sense of frustration, anger and despair among the population constitute a certain prescription for tension in society and political instability, which can eventually blow up in one form or another. Sometimes the situation is made worse, as we have seen in many other countries throughout the world, by natural disasters of one kind or another — earthquakes, drought, floods, hurricanes, tsunamis — that expose and accentuate vulnerabilities and cause what would otherwise be avoidable damage, suffering and misery. International sympathy and assistance are needed in many of these cases, and needed in time — not after the blowout. Prevention is wiser than cure, and it is less painful and often less costly.

I had an opportunity to pay a visit to Haiti in mid-2003, when I was still in the service of the humanitarian arm of the United Nations. By early 2003, it was already recognized in the international aid community in Haiti that the situation in the country might be quickly reaching an extremely dangerous stage.

Unfortunately, early warnings of possible impending crisis went largely unheeded by the United Nations and the international donor community, and little concrete action was taken until the crisis had materialized. Haiti should serve as yet another good lesson for the future more generally as we ask some relevant questions: How do we set up a more effective early-warning mechanism as part of the efforts aimed at conflict prevention and at the prevention of a recurrence of crisis? What sort of preventive measures can be realistically taken by the international community in general and by the United Nations in particular? How can we best organize ourselves to undertake such activities? The report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change commissioned by the Secretary-General (A/59/565) offers some clues and ideas that the Organization will soon address in a serious way. We hope that important steps forward will be taken as a result.

That being said, we welcome the efforts of the Transitional Government of Haiti to stabilize its political situation with the support of the international community. Japan would also like to commend the proactive steps taken by MINUSTAH and the Transitional Government of Haiti, particularly to improve the security situation, including their recent joint operations in Port-au-Prince and in other areas, and we expect that such initiatives will continue.

Progress in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration is manifestly important, not least for the success of the forthcoming national and local elections. Although we welcome the statement of Prime Minister Latortue to move on that issue, we would like to call upon the Transitional Government to make strong efforts to be proactive in that area, making use of the support of MINUSTAH.

It is of great importance that the Haitian people take steps towards promoting a process of meaningful national dialogue, with a full sense of ownership, to create a more stable political environment. The Transitional Government is expected to continue to call for national reconciliation and to promote quick-impact projects. For the medium to long term, political and economic restructuring and corruption-prevention measures, as well as development policy measures that contribute to the improvement of people's lives, should be vigorously pursued. That will be the surest path for the Government to follow to gain the broad support of the people.

From that point of view, the support of the Special Representative and of MINUSTAH is critically important; we call for their active initiative in this matter. At the same time, we remain concerned about the arbitrary detention of people solely on the grounds of their political affiliation, as the report of the Secretary-General points out. We believe that that is neither advisable nor condonable, as such action will not serve to facilitate the national dialogue and is in direct contravention of fundamental human rights principles.

The consolidation of peace in Haiti requires not only national dialogue, but also an improved humanitarian and economic environment. For the success of the elections scheduled for November, prompt disbursement of the funds pledged at the international donor conference on Haiti held last July is also essential. All three of the projects in the areas of health, food and agriculture pledged by Japan have already been implemented. To date, the total assistance extended by Japan to Haiti in the form of development aid, technical assistance and emergency relief amounts to more than $160 million. The international community may rest assured that Japan will never falter in its efforts to help Haiti and its people.

Mr. Mahiga (United Republic of Tanzania): The United Republic of Tanzania welcomes the initiative of Argentina to organize this special debate on Haiti and also welcomes Argentina's commitment to Haiti, which is demonstrated, Mr. Minister, by your presence among us today. We thank Mr. Juan Gabriel Valdés, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his informative report. We would also like to thank the Foreign Ministers of Haiti, Barbados, Brazil, Chile and the Dominican Republic; the State Secretary for Foreign Affairs of France; the Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs of the United States; and the Acting Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS) for their statements and for the committed involvement and contribution of their respective countries and organizations in finding a solution to the problems in Haiti.

The situation in Haiti is a source of great concern. The disregard for the rule of law, the worsening security situation, the abuse of human rights, the violence against women and children, the arbitrary arrests and the threats and intimidation directed against human rights activists are of great concern to all of us. Tanzania commends the efforts of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and of the Haitian police in countering the spread of violence under very trying circumstances. We welcome and encourage the efforts of the Transitional Government of Haiti to establish a national commission on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, as recommended by the Secretary-General, to facilitate the work of restoring order and curbing violence. That must be a priority, as armed former soldiers appear to be a major factor in the current insecurity.

The people of Haiti have also suffered from repeated natural disasters — the latest of which was the devastating tropical storm last September — which have crippled an already distressed socio-economic situation. We express our sympathy for the loss of lives and property and the destruction caused by those phenomena. We commend the Caribbean Community and other neighbours of Haiti that sent assistance, and all the United Nations agencies and other humanitarian organizations that took immediate steps to respond to the natural disasters.

We also commend those who pledged funding for relief following the Haitian floods appeal, as well as all those — including the international financial institutions — who had previously made pledges at the donor conference for the Interim Cooperation Framework. We believe that timely disbursement of the pledged funds will have a decisive impact on the rehabilitation work and the development efforts in Haiti. In that regard, we support the strengthening and realization of the three pillars of MINUSTAH and the establishment of a long-term development strategy for Haiti. It should be noted that the chronically depressed state of the economy and the abject poverty in Haiti, with the resulting widespread unemployment, greatly contribute to the prevailing insecurity in the country and need to be addressed affirmatively in the overall recovery strategy for Haiti.

Tanzania welcomes the commitment made by the Transitional Government to organize free, fair and credible elections. It is our hope that the elections will indeed be held in November and December 2005, as planned, as the culmination of an inclusive political process and a reconciliation that the Transitional Government should be preparing now. We therefore encourage the continuation of a national dialogue process among all political parties and civil society, and we urge them to participate in the coming elections. We recognize here the contribution of the OAS in preparing the voter registration, which is an important and necessary step in the holding of elections.

We also urge and encourage the full deployment of troops by contributing countries, police and other personnel to strengthen MINUSTAH's ability to face the challenges of re-establishing stability and to carry out its mandate as well as to build the capacity of the local institutions.

Finally, Tanzania hopes that, this time around, the United Nations and the international community as a whole will remain fully committed to Haiti well beyond this transitional process to consolidate the peace process through a comprehensive peace-building engagement. The proposed mission of the Security Council to Haiti will indeed sustain the focus and attention on Haiti.

Mr. Wang Guangya (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Mr. Foreign Minister, the Chinese delegation welcomes your presence here in the Security Council to preside over this important meeting. We welcome also the presence of Mr. Siméon, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Haiti, and we wish to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Valdés for his briefing to the Council.

The presence of foreign ministers and high-level officials from many countries and that of the Acting Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS) is a reflection of the international community's deep concern and firm commitment vis-à-vis Haiti as it moves towards peace and stability. We are deeply appreciative of that fact.

We are pleased to have witnessed some positive changes in the situation in Haiti recently. In the more than seven months since the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) was first deployed, 90 per cent of the peacekeepers and 95 per cent of the police are already on the ground, successfully implementing the mandate entrusted to them by the Security Council. They have basically stabilized the security situation in Haiti.

Secondly, in the area of disarmament, the restoration of the rule of law and the promotion of national reconciliation, the Transitional Government of Haiti has successively adopted positive and proactive measures, which have already begun to take effect. The Transitional Government's unremitting efforts deserve full acknowledgement.

Thirdly, confidence in Haiti from all sides has been mounting and inputs have increased, resulting in favourable conditions for a comprehensive settlement of the question of Haiti. The World Bank's recent release of $73 million in assistance to Haiti in particular is an encouraging sign.

Considering the complex and difficult nature of the situation in Haiti, we believe that these achievements are indeed hard-won. I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate the Transitional Government and the people of Haiti and to pay tribute to Mr. Valdés and to MINUSTAH for their tireless efforts.

Achieving national reconciliation, improving the security situation and promoting economic development are the three pillars of the settlement of the issue of Haiti and the basic guarantee for such a settlement. They must be given simultaneous attention. None should be emphasized to the detriment of another.

We hope that the Transitional Government will swiftly launch a national dialogue and reconciliation process, strive for consensus among all domestic parties and create a favourable environment for the successful holding of the election. We hope that it will speedily establish a national commission on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) and promote the collection of weapons from civilians in the context of the DDR programme, create more employment opportunities, effectively improve people's living conditions, and increase the population's confidence in the future of the nation.

At the same time, I wish to emphasize that the peace, stability and development of Haiti as a least developed country will not be possible without the vigorous support and assistance of the international community, including the United Nations, as well as the active support and participation of countries and organizations of the region.

In that connection, lessons should be drawn from the past. The attention given to Haiti and the inputs made must be kept up in a sustainable manner. We therefore are in favour of keeping the question of Haiti under constant consideration in the Security Council and believe that MINUSTAH's presence in Haiti must be considered on the basis of need. We support a continued major role by relevant departments of the United Nations, the OAS and other international agencies in the process of achieving peace and stability in Haiti. We appeal to donor countries and to the international financial institutions concerned to expeditiously deliver on their pledge commitments. We are in favour of the issuing of a presidential statement, as drafted by Argentina, following this debate.

Although there are no diplomatic relations between China and Haiti, the Chinese people have always had friendly feelings towards the Haitian

people and have been following developments in the situation in that country. We have already provided, and will continue to provide, assistance in good faith to the peace and stability process in Haiti. We are firmly convinced that the Haitian people, who, through their heroic struggles, were the first in Latin America to achieve independence, will certainly achieve durable peace and sustainable development with the assistance of the international community and through their own unremitting efforts.

Haiti, the pearl of the Antilles, will without a doubt overcome its difficult circumstances and shine in all its gleaming splendour.

Mr. Baja (Philippines): We are honoured that you, Sir, the Foreign Minister of Argentina, are presiding over this important meeting on Haiti. We also welcome and thank the Foreign Minister of Haiti for his statement. We are grateful to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), Ambassador Juan Gabriel Valdés, and the Acting Secretary General of the Organization of American States for their informative presentations.

Next month will mark the first year of the re-engagement of the United Nations in Haiti. The international community's response — initially through the multinational interim force and now through MINUSTAH — has prevented Haiti from sliding further into instability, which would have adversely affected the region.

MINUSTAH is now close to its authorized military and civilian levels, tasked with law enforcement and other related responsibilities. Filipino military and civilian police forces are now part of MINUSTAH. The Philippines is encouraged to note that MINUSTAH now has a credible military and police presence to allow it to respond more effectively to threats to the country's stability.

The improved law and order situation is expected to pave the way for reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts, with the help of the international community. It is gratifying to note that the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have approved loan packages for economic governance and emergency recovery and disaster management.

The task ahead for MINUSTAH is not going to be easy. The immediate challenge for the Mission is how to address the reported climate of fear prevailing in Haiti and create a safe and secure environment that will allow the Haitian people to resume their normal way of life. That will involve countering the continuing threat posed by the armed gangs and dissident former soldiers who have recently threatened to wage guerrilla warfare against the Transitional Government.

The second challenge is for the Transitional Government to take concrete steps towards the establishment of a national commission on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. MINUSTAH and the Haitian authorities should explore more creative ways to entice those former soldiers and gang members to turn in their weapons in exchange for, among other things, compensation or livelihood opportunities.

We are pleased to note that initial steps have already been taken in that direction. We welcome the steps taken by the Transitional Government to look into the valid demands of demobilized soldiers. The greatest weapons to meet the challenges are hope and commitment.

We hope to see Haiti's transitional leaders exercise a greater degree of flexibility and tolerance and exert greater efforts to persuade those who remain outside the political process to renounce violence and take part in rebuilding their nation. We welcome the release of Fanmi Lavalas leaders as a positive step towards national reconciliation.

We hope to see the Haitian authorities place greater emphasis on human rights and put an end to impunity. We hope that the Transitional Government will end the reported illegal and arbitrary arrests and detentions, summary executions of human rights activists and acts of sexual violence against women and that those responsible for those acts will be held accountable.

We hope to see the transformation of the Haiti National Police into a professional police organization that respects human rights and adheres to international norms and standards.

We hope to see the redemption of the pledges made during the international donors conference six months ago to support the Transitional Government in preparing and implementing development projects that are vital to the stabilization process. We also look forward to the establishment of a long-term development strategy for Haiti in accordance with the

priorities underlined in the interim cooperation framework.

We hope to see the people of Haiti go to the polls in November to freely elect their new leaders. In that regard, we welcome the preparations being undertaken by the Transitional Government and the Provisional Electoral Council to ensure the holding of free, inclusive and peaceful elections in November. We also welcome the global agreement, recently initialled in the office of Prime Minister Gérard Latortue, which will bring $41 million from Canada, the European Union and the United States to Haiti for its elections later this year.

We hope that the Core Group on Haiti, the Organization of American States and the Caribbean Community will continue to play a constructive role in Haiti.

We support a mission to Haiti in conjunction with a mission of the Economic and Social Council's Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti.

Our common vision for a democratic and stable Haiti requires the long-term commitment of the international community. MINUSTAH should learn lessons from previous United Nations missions in the country. Its success hinges on how far we are willing to support MINUSTAH in its objective of institution-building, national reconstruction and economic rehabilitation.

Mr. Baali (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): Allow me, Mr. Minister, to welcome you to the Security Council, and I warmly congratulate you on Argentina's assumption of the presidency of the Council. Finally, I thank you for convening this important debate on the situation in Haiti. I would also like to welcome the presence at this important debate of the Ministers who wished to participate and thank Mr. Valdés for his comprehensive presentation and the excellent work he is doing in Haiti.

The particularly serious crisis that has afflicted Haiti for over a year does not seem close to being resolved as so considerable challenges remain. State institutions have been permanently destabilized, and the country's economy was affected, exacerbating the economic and social marginalization of many segments of society and contributing to growing insecurity in the form of armed violence and greater impunity.

The Security Council's deployment of an interim force and, later, of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) has indeed had a very positive effect on the overall situation. Algeria cannot but pay tribute to those leading the Mission and to the troops participating in it for the progress achieved. Through joint operations with the National Police of Haiti, MINUSTAH has improved security conditions, to which the principal challenge has been the persistence of armed groups that continue to pose a serious threat to the transition process under way.

For that reason, we feel that it is urgent to disarm all armed groups and bands. We believe that a complete disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programme is necessary. We note with satisfaction the decision of the Transitional Government to create a national disarmament commission. It seems equally important to us that the Government examine comprehensively the situation of former members of the armed forces and the question of their compensation in order to reintegrate them into society.

We call upon the Transitional Government to take the necessary measures to ensure the holding of local legislative and presidential elections. We note with satisfaction the announcement made by the Chairman of the Provisional Electoral Council concerning the finalization of the electoral law and timetable.

However, for the transitional process and the upcoming elections to succeed, we believe it is crucial that all actors of society participate, so that peace and security can be permanently restored in Haiti, and that all those that have been excluded from the transitional process be included in the democratic and electoral process, because it is vital that a national dialogue comprehending all political movements be established in order to promote national reconciliation, which is inseparable from an impartial struggle against impunity. A functional system of justice free of influence must also be established.

More than half the population of Haiti lives below the poverty line, and living conditions are constantly deteriorating, against the backdrop of a national economy dependent on foreign aid.

My delegation believes that it is crucial that the international community further commit to helping the Haitian population in the long term. As the Secretary-General has said, the activities of the international

community and the United Nations must be take place on a long-term basis. Mr. Annan added that he hoped that this time the international community would not be satisfied with putting a band aid on the situation or merely stabilizing the situation but would help the Haitians over the long haul to pick up the pieces and build a stable country.

International assistance must focus on long-term programmes aimed at the political and social reconstruction of the country. It is urgent to strengthen governance, give the population access to basic social services, ensure respect for human rights and enhance institutional capacity to ensure the rule of law. The international community has the duty to help the Government of Haiti to lay the foundations for economic growth, reduce poverty and strengthen State structures in order to facilitate the formulation and implementation of policies leading to lasting development. It must now honour its commitments by accelerating the disbursal of its pledged assistance at the World Bank donors conference.

Normalization of the political situation in Haiti and the improvement of economic conditions must be accompanied by the country's reintegration in its natural regional environment and in a framework of cooperation and solidarity provided by the Organization of American States and the Caribbean Community. The presence in the Council and the statements of Ministers of the region and the Acting Secretary General of the Organization of American States give us hope for Haiti's normalization of relations with its neighbours, which would undoubtedly be a further contribution to peace and stability in the region as a whole.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): As it is now 10 minutes past 1 p.m. and since there are still speakers remaining on the list, the wise and experienced individuals who assist the presidency have suggested that, with the consent of the Council, this meeting be suspended until 3 p.m. If there are no objections, I shall suspend the meeting.

The meeting was suspended at 1.10 p.m.